



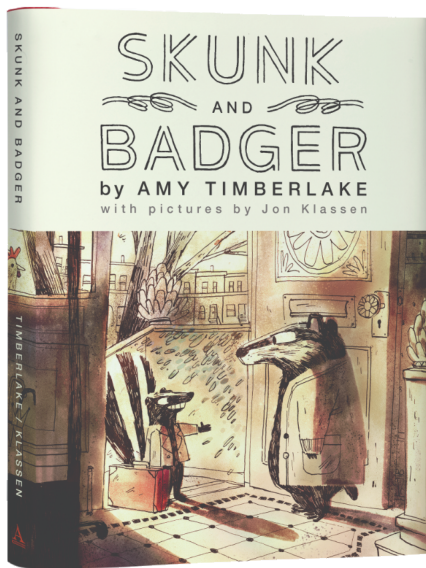
Educator Guide

SKUNK AND BADGER

by AMY TIMBERLAKE
with pictures by Jon Klassen



SKUNK AND BADGER



WHEN AUNT LULA INVITES SKUNK to live in her brownstone house, Badger is not happy. He prefers to live alone so that he can concentrate on his Important Rock Work, and he definitely does not want to live with a skunk. Skunk's arrival disrupts Badger's ordered and solitary existence. Suddenly, chickens are everywhere, the kitchen is a mess, and there is a Rocket Potato where there once was peace and quiet. It's not easy to live with someone (especially a skunk), but through the misunderstandings and challenges, Badger learns what it means to have and be a friend.

VOCABULARY

- amends (page 103)
- aroma (page 87)
- avail (page 86)
- barnacle (page 29)
- blither (page 14)
- careen (page 63)
- congregate (page 13)
- defile (page 90)
- deplorable (page 90)
- eddy (page 95)
- expedition (page 107)
- fiasco (page 67)
- fidget (page 92)
- flinch (page 10)
- fluorescent (page 12)
- fug (page 107)
- geode (page 2)
- irrefutable (page 101)
- leisure (page 96)
- nuisance (page 92)
- ovation (page 87)
- persistence (page 65)
- pointed (page 72)
- precarious (page 15)
- relentlessly (page 8)
- reverberate (page 29)
- ricochet (page 33)
- scald (page 92)
- scrutinize (page 109)
- shoehorn (page 8)
- slog (page 14)
- sluggish (page 83)
- sludge (page 4)
- slurry (page 4)
- smudge (page 30)
- spigot (page 86)
- sprawl (page 97)
- sustenance (page 64)
- swagger (page 83)
- tentative (page 109)
- terrarium (page 99)
- traverse (page 67)
- understory (page 89)
- vaporization (page 84)
- vermin (page 92)
- vigorous (page 6)
- vile (page 90)



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DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. Why does Badger initially think that Skunk is at his house? Why didn't he know that Skunk was coming to live with him? How can you tell that he does not want a roommate?
2. Why does Badger put Skunk in the Special Guest Closet instead of offering him a room upstairs? What do you think Aunt Lula would say if she knew how Badger was treating Skunk?
3. Skunk tells Badger that he does not have a place to live because "not everyone wants a skunk" (page 10). Why do you think others might not want to be friends with a skunk? What good qualities does Skunk have?
4. Skunk believes that "breakfast is the nicest meal" (page 20). Which meal do you think is the nicest meal of the day? If you were going to share a special meal with a friend, what would you put on the menu?
5. The word syntax describes the choices that a writer makes when they construct sentences. Look for places where Amy Timberlake uses features like parentheses, spacing, italics, capitalization, and underlining, and explain how these choices affect the meaning of the sentence. Examples can be found on pages 3, 4, 6, 9, and 11.
6. Why does Badger change his mind about letting Skunk live with him? What rules do they establish to help them get along as roommates (page 37)? Do you think the rules are fair? How do these rules change by the end of the book (pages 118–119)?
7. Think about the book's illustrations. Does the style of them remind you of illustrations you've seen in other books? Why do you think the illustrator uses this style? What do you think illustrations add to a story? If you could include one more illustration in this book, which scene would you want to see illustrated?
8. Chicken Little decides to use the discovery of the Quantum Leap "for the Greater Good of All Chickens" (pages 68–69). What do you think it means to do something for the greater good of society? Can you think of any real-life examples of people who did something for the greater good?
9. Examine Skunk's apology for flattening the boxes in Badger's box room (page 51). What does he realize about the way his actions affected someone else? Why is it important to apologize, even if the mistake you make is an accident?
10. What causes Skunk to spray his defensive skunk odor? Do you think he did the right thing?



Guide prepared by Amy Jurskis, English teacher and Academic Affairs Associate at Oxbridge Academy in West Palm Beach, Florida.



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DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

11. What is a nuisance animal? What is the definition of vermin (pages 92–93)? Do you think that skunks are either of these things?

12. We use the term dynamic to describe a character who changes during the course of a story. Explain why Badger is a dynamic character. What causes him to change? How does he change?

13. When Badger thinks about the way he treated Skunk, he realizes: “His behavior had revealed things about him that he’d rather not know and now he knew” (page 113). What does his behavior reveal about him?

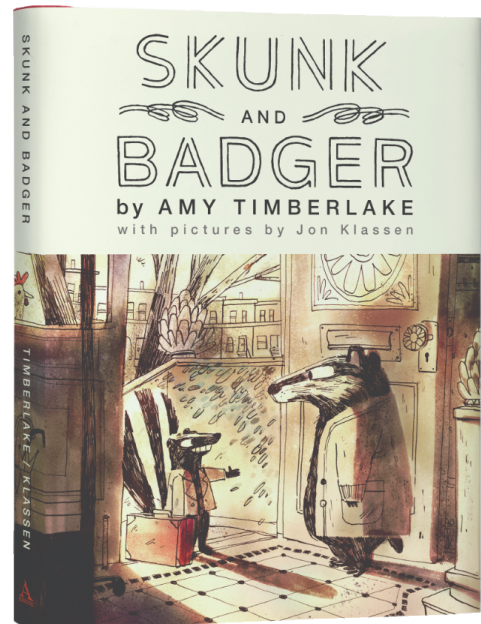
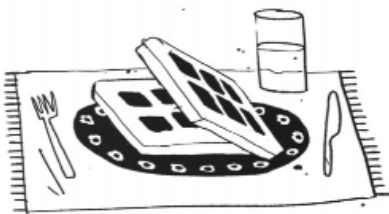
14. When Badger goes looking for Skunk, what does he realize about the town of North Twist? Why is it “problematic” that he does not really know his own town?

15. In the story that Skunk reads about King Henry, one of the themes is that “the fastest way to win a kingdom is by being kind and gentle instead of using violence and cruelty” (page 46). Explain whether you agree or disagree with this statement. Why is it sometimes difficult to be kind and gentle?

16. When Badger is preparing to apologize to Skunk, other animals give him advice about how to apologize (page 105). What do you think makes an apology a good apology? What makes it hard to apologize? Analyze the apology Badger makes. What made it an effective apology?

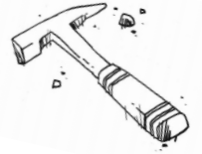
17. The last chapter of the book is titled “The Beginning.” What do you think this title means? What do you hope happens after this story ends?

18. In *Skunk and Badger*, activities like reading aloud, singing, and sharing a meal all bring characters together. Can you think of other activities that can help build friendships and community?





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ACTIVITIES

1. You may have heard the saying “Opposites attract.” Write a short comparison-and-contrast essay about Skunk and Badger. How do their differences help make them good companions for each other?
2. Geology is the scientific study of the solid earth and the rocks and minerals that compose it. Explore the study of geology by re-creating some of Badger’s important rock research. Begin by identifying specimens as rocks or minerals, and then try to classify each rock specimen as igneous, sedimentary, or metamorphic. Keep a scientific journal to record your hypotheses, observations, and conclusions.
3. The chickens love stories about the further adventures of Chicken Little and the discovery of the quantum leap, which allows chickens to disappear and reappear instantaneously. Since Badger believes that adventure and science make “the best stories” (page 70), write your own story that combines science and adventure. You might want to write about a quantum leap, but you can write about any other theory that you find interesting.
4. Skunk is an expert on different types of chickens, and the breeds of chickens mentioned in the book include: Orloff, Ko Shamo, Jersey Giant, Leghorn, Orpington, Transylvania Naked Neck, and Dominicker. Research each of the different breeds of chickens mentioned in the book. What characteristics make each breed unique? Choose your favorite breed and debate why you believe this breed is the best.
5. When Badger goes to Queggly Hill Park, he takes an inventory of his surroundings and decides that it has “everything necessary for a good day” (page 108). If you could design a park, what features would you make sure to include? What would you name it? Create a map or model of your perfect park and describe how a person could spend a perfect day there.
6. Badger keeps a rock expedition knapsack containing “a hard hat, protective goggles, a tool belt, a utility knife, a chisel, a hammer, specimen bags, a flashlight, a hand lens on a lanyard, a pencil magnet, a compass, two snack bars, a full water bottle, and one waterproof ukulele” ready at all times (page 107). How could each of these objects help him on a rock expedition? Think of an activity that you enjoy and make a knapsack or backpack that contains things that would be useful to you. Explain the purpose of each item that you pack.

